

Microeconomics (Upper Division) — GSI Section Syllabus

GSI: Clotaire Boyer (he/him)

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Email: clotaire.boyer@berkeley.edu

Website: <https://clotaireboyer.github.io/Academic-Website-Clotaire-Boyer/>

Sections: 114 (TR 6pm in Latimer 102) and 117 (TR 1pm in Evans 70)

OH: Wednesdays, 9am - 10am (Zoom) ; Thursdays 5pm - 6pm (Evans 640).

What We Do in Section

Section complements (not repeats) lecture. We will:

- Work through targeted problem sets and **exam preparation**.
- Discuss weekly academic readings
- Re-explain and discuss core concepts rigorously, with proofs/intuition as appropriate.
- Connect material to **recent research papers** to show how ideas operate in practice. I will do my best to provide you with useful references for your essay and to get you a sense of what economic research is like!

Reading Presentation

There will be a short presentation on a reading for which you can find the course grid on bcourses. The expectation is an academic standard presentation that goes well beyond a good understanding of the paper, which is only the first stage of a great work. You will then need to think through the main points of tensions and document yourself on the intellectual context of the paper. What you will tell us will be a tiny part of this second stage work that will help you identify what content is the most relevant to make our group learn well beyond the paper. You are not here to make the field progress but aim at taking an original perspective on the paper while building on existing knowledge. In that logic, I will be very careful about appropriate citations. This is to me by far the hardest part but also how you will learn the most! You need to identify a good balance between seminal works on that notion that cannot be skipped, and more recent work or future research questions. On the formatting side, I am open to any structure that you find relevant, but my advice would be to use an essay-like dialectic structure which is always more stimulating for your audience and will simulatenously prepare you for the final exam.

Participation matters a lot to me!

I would love to have the most engaging section! I consider totally valid many forms of participation:

- Active listening and careful note-taking
- Thoughtful preparation; asking precise questions after reflection
- Helping a classmate understand a concept
- Sharing a well-formulated idea after a long pause
- Coming to office hours with targeted questions

- Bringing relevant research tidbits that connect to class

Communication & Availability

Office hours are the primary help channel. Please try to book them in advance on my website! I do not see a lot of cases in which email communication will more efficient, perhaps only for rare and urgent logistic concerns. For all conceptual questions, please come to OH or ask in section so everyone benefits.

Expectations, Devices, and Attendance

- **Attendance:** I might take attendance as recommended by the course policy. I prefer not to police it closely: illness & life happens you do not need to justify occasional absences to me. Follow lecture-wide policies and stay reasonable.
- **Devices:** Use any device you want. This is an academic space so try to be considerate with noise and attention.
- **Deadlines:** Follow course standards; no need to overshare explanations to me. I want to trust you so just try to do your best: I know unexpected circumstances can happen.

Academic Integrity & Plagiarism

All university policies apply. Submit your own work. When using material (theory, text, figures, code, or data) from lectures, notes, or external sources, **cite appropriately**. For presentations/essays, always include a references slide or section (any consistent academic style is fine). Suspected violations are reported to the appropriate office.

Research Paper Spotlights (Optional but Encouraged)

I will occasionally introduce recent applied micro/public finance/IO/development papers to connect theory to practice. These can be cited in your essays. Example areas: consumer demand and welfare measurement, pass-through and incidence, market structure and policy, taxation and informality, social protection design. As PhD students and candidates, we are usually passionate by our field and we are thus always very excited to discuss more academic research in OH! I hope I can transmit that enthusiasm to some of you.

Community norms and accessibility

We learn best in a respectful, curious, and inclusive environment. Thank you for contributing to it. If you need accommodations, please coordinate with DSP and they will let me know how my sections can best support you.

After the Course: Stay in Touch

Don't be a stranger! Reach out about economics, research paths, or readings. I regularly get URAP RAs (including this semester). Interested students should watch the URAP portal and come discuss in OH :)

I wish you all a great semester!